

MY NEW TOY BOOK





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MY NEW TOY BOOK.



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Contents.



THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.

*THE MONEY BOX—BUYING THE SEEDS—IN THE GARDEN—UNWELCOME
GUESTS—FIRST FLOWERS—A PRESENT FOR NURSE.*



THE STORY OF A GOAT.

*THE NEW FRIEND—GREAT FUN—THE GOAT-CHAISE—ROUGH PLAY—IN
THE HAY-FIELD—THE FUGITIVE.*



THE NEW PET.

*POOR JACK—IN THE CAGE—CLEVER TRICKS—HOW ARE YOU!—ON THE
DRESSING TABLE—JACK WITH THE PEN.*



THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

*EVA SAVED—PAPA, DO BUY HIM—IN THE KITCHEN—EVA AND UNCLE
TOM—THE NECKLACE—EVA AND TOPSY.*

THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.

THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.



It was such a pretty house! I am sure every boy and girl would have said so; but it was still more delightful to children who had lived so long in a dull dark town, where there were no sweet roses peeping in at the windows, no trees shading the porch, no ivy climbing up even to the chimney-pots, as it did in this new home of the happy little people about whom I mean to tell you. Charlie, Minnie, Ralph, and Jessie Hall were their names; and when their mother told them they were going to live in the country, they clapped their hands and set up a glad shout; but when they saw "The Dene," as the house was called, they danced for joy.

"You shall have a piece of ground to be your own garden," said Mrs. Hall, on the first morning, when they had been everywhere inside and outside the new home. "You shall buy seeds to sow in it, and when the summer comes you will see pretty flowers in the beds. But you must dig up the earth, and rake it, and pick off the large stones before you sow seed or plant flowers."

"We shall want a spade, a rake, a watering-pot—ever so many things!" cried Ralph and Charlie, who knew that spades and rakes and watering-pots cost money, and looked into their mother's face, as if they would ask how they were to be bought. Minnie and Jessie said nothing. They were





THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.

wishing they had not spent quite so many pence in sweets while they lived in the town and saw such tempting shops.

Mrs. Hall smiled, and said, "I shall buy you the garden tools; but I think the seeds and plants must come out of the money-box."

Now I ought to tell you that these children had a money-box between them, which was only opened four times in the year, and the pence in it were spent in games which would do for all; it was called the "general" money-box, for besides this, each child had one all to himself or herself. Sometimes a book was bought out of this little store, and then it belonged as much to Charlie as to Minnie, and as much to Ralph as to Jessie. I heard that this plan was made with the hope of keeping the brothers and sisters from being selfish; and I think they had a garden between them all, just for the same reason, and so not one could say, "I *will*; for it is mine," or, "You shall not; it is not yours."

Those are very hard speeches, but we do hear them sometimes among children of one family. So now you will see that the pence in this "general money-box" were likely to come in usefully to stock the Halls' garden with flowers or roots.

As soon as their mother had spoken, the four children ran to the parlour, the box was put on the table, and Charlie opened it, because he was eldest. You can see by their faces that they are all pleased when the coins are taken out; perhaps they did not know they were quite so rich, and so they smile as the pennies and halfpence and threepenny pieces appear, for they feel sure they shall get some nice seeds for this little plot of ground, which is all their own.

The first thing was to do what their mother wished, and Charlie, Minnie, and Jessie took turns in digging up the garden, and Ralph picked up every weed and every stone, though he felt very tired before he had done, I can assure you. Then the beds were neatly raked, and after this the girls put



THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.

on their hats and the boys their caps, and off they went to a shop not far from their home, at which their mother told them they could buy all they wanted.

A very kind man was John Day, who kept this small shop ; he knew more about gardens than these young folks, who had been shut up in a close town all their lives, and had never seen many plants and flowers ; so he told them what would grow best in their borders, and seemed to be almost as pleased as they were in choosing out the neat packets of seeds. Besides this, he showed them some hardy roots which would thrive well and flower in the summer-time if they were taken care of.

When all the money was spent (but not before), the young Halls said " Good-morning " to John Day, and carried home their treasures to show their mother, and to every one they saw. They never would have guessed that so many purchases could have come out of the " general money-box."

There were a few lessons to be done that morning, copies to be written, a sum to be made right upon each of the four slates, and then the children were free. I need not tell you that they tried to lose no time, and to do their very best so that they might get quickly to work in their piece of garden.

There is just one thing I must tell you which shows they were kind brothers and sisters. When Charlie, Minnie, and Jessie had quite finished, poor Ralph was still in the first line of his copy, and they all waited for him, and did not scold because he was slow, nor threaten to begin gardening without him. So we must hope that the Halls were children who tried to practise as well as know the Bible words, " Be kindly affectioned one to another."

Now look at the next picture, and see how busy they are. Ralph is holding the coarse sieve, and Charlie helps to sift the mould through it, so that there shall be no rough ugly lumps of earth round their seeds and

THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.

flowers, but a smooth neat bed, in which everything shall grow well, and which may be a credit to the young owners. Minnie holds the watering-can, Jessie has the basket of seeds, and even "Dan," the house-dog, would like to do something; so he sits by with his bright eyes lifted to Charlie's face, as if waiting for orders. Every one is useful, every one happy, because all is peace; and not a cross, jealous, impatient word is heard.

While they worked they were talking fast and merrily. They talked of the new home, and how they loved it already, and hoped they might never go away from it. They talked of the trees and the grass, and the bright sky, and the birds' songs, and every other pleasure found in the country. They talked, too, of their garden, and the flowers they hoped to pick from it by-and-by; but if I told you all they said that sunny May morning, this little story of Charlie, Minnie, Ralph and Jessie Hall would be too long.

And now you must suppose that a good many days have passed by, that the month of May has been followed by June, and that June itself is slipping away; you must think, too, that there has been some gentle rain; some cloudy days, in which plants grow so well, a great deal of warm sun, and a *very* great deal of care and work on the part of our four little gardeners. When you remember all this you will not wonder that the plot of ground which is called the "Children's own" is looking well; that the seeds have sprung up, that the roots have grown, and that very soon there may be a fine nosegay gathered for some one who Charlie, Minnie, Ralph and Jessie love very much.

But one day a very sad sight was seen from the window of the school-room. Some one had left open the garden-gate, and you may see the unwelcome guests who have walked in to feast upon the tender little leaves and seedlings—one, two, three, four, five pigs—no, *six*, for I had forgotten the saucy little fellow who is busy at the wheel-barrow! No wonder that the children throw down their books and rush out, making all the noise they



THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.

can ; and the pigs soon find themselves turned out of the garden. But it takes a great many days to make the smart garden as trim as it was before this visit, and the boys and girls look well to the pig-stye door, and to the gate which opens near their little piece of ground, for fear of another misfortune. They felt all the more vexed because they so often went to feed these greedy animals, and it seemed such a bad return for kindness ; but what can be expected of pigs, which care only to eat all that comes in their way ?

Every morning the young Halls worked at their garden, finding something always to be done ; and then it was such a pleasure to see the blossoms begin to appear, and to watch them opening more and more into full and perfect flowers. I should think that they could not tend their gardens so carefully without some thought of the good God who made the earth and the plants which rejoice us, and who sends the sunshine and the rain needed for their growth ; and in thinking of this great Creator they would love Him more and more, and thank Him for all His gifts to man.

Now that the flowers were appearing, these children forgot all the labour and the waiting which had at times seemed long ; they even *almost* forgot and forgave the visit of the pigs, and would have told you that gardening is all pleasure. Of course the first flower which bloomed was for mother ; there was no doubt about it in either of the four minds. The second was for father, and he wore it in the button-hole of his coat through one long summer day, only taking it out at night when it was quite faded. Some friends asked him why he wore this flower, and to each one he said, " Because it is from the children's garden."

But soon the flowers were so many that there was no need to pick them one by one ; a whole basket-full could be gathered, and yet the little bed did not look stripped and bare. So these four young gardeners, who wished to give as well as to get pleasure out of their plot of ground, thought of some one who would like their sweet bright blossoms.





THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.

It was Minnie who said, "Let us take some to old nurse." But the three voices chimed in at once, "Oh, yes, Minnie, what a good thought! Mother, may we take old nurse a basket of flowers from our own garden?"

Mrs. Hall was very pleased to say "yes," for nurse had taken care of her children when they were little babies, and she wished them to be kind to her now she was old. It was for this reason that when they all came to their country home, a room was found for nurse in a cottage only a short way from them, so that they might pay her a visit very often, and cheer her up if she felt dull or sad.

Nurse could sew a little, but she was lame, and had to sit still by the window, looking out upon the fields and trees, instead of going out like those who were well and strong. Her chief pleasure then was to see the four children, whose bright faces were like a gleam of sunshine in her little room; and very often she would tell them tales of their own mother, when she was no older than Minnie or Jessie. In their turn they told her all they did, and of course she knew the history of their garden; but she did not know what beautiful flowers had sprung up there, until one morning a basket full was brought in, round which clustered our young friends, all eagerly telling her that this was a gift from *themselves* no one else had planted the roots, or sowed and watered the seeds which now produced these lovely blossoms.

Nurse had been reading her chapter in the Bible, but she laid down her spectacles to admire the roses and lilies and mignonette, and all the sweet flowers, which seemed like little messengers, to tell of the God who made them; and then she asked the children to find for her some verses about the beauty of the world, and so even from their own little garden to get lessons and thoughts which should turn their hearts to Him who is the Giver of all Good, and all fair and lovely things around us.

THE STORY OF A GOAT.



THE STORY OF A GOAT.

IF ever you had gone to spend a little time at Lawn House, with George, May, and Frank Ross, I think you would have held up both your hands and cried out, "Oh! what a great many pets." I know *I* did this on my first visit to that nice country house.

First of all I saw Ruffle, the black cat; and Frill, the grey cat; and Puff, the snow-white kitten, lying in the sunshine which came on the deep window-seats, where these pets slept nearly all the long summer day. Then I had to see big dogs, and *rather* small dogs, and *very* small dogs; horses and ponies in the stable; cocks and hens, pigeons, rabbits, cows, calves, and pigs.

Now will you wonder that I say I thought these children could want no other live thing to love and fondle? but I soon found my mistake. That night, May told me some news; *she* called it a secret, but I cannot call it so, for all the people in and about the place knew that her father had bought a goat, and that it was coming to Lawn House the next day.





THE STORY OF A GOAT.

What glee there was when George's voice rang out through the house, "He's come, the goat has come;" I can tell you there was no need to bid either May or little Frank "make haste," for they ran down the stair so fast that their mother hurried after, to make sure that neither of them had a roll into the hall.

There at the door stood George, with his hand on "Benny," as if he would say, "This is my pet;" and the goat kept so still while Frank stroked him that we all cried, "He is a good gentle creature, just fit for little folks."

Mr. Ross had said that he would buy a small carriage for the goat to draw, but it had not yet come home; so as these children wanted to have some fun with their pet at once, George found a strong cord and began to drive him about in the field, to see how fast he would go.

"Benny" was very willing to do this, and May and Frank ran by his side while George guided him here and there, and round and round, for quite half an hour, and then Frank thought *he* should not be afraid even though he was quite a little boy. So the cord was put into his hands, and his brother kept by the head of the goat, just as you see in the picture, so that he could call "stop," if Benny went too fast.

All this was great fun, as you will know, and I fear that the children would never have been ready to go in-doors to their tea if they had not feared to tire their new pet.

So while George and May and Frank eat bread and jam



THE STORY OF A GOAT.

in their mother's parlour, Benny was put in the stable with the green food he liked so much, and everything to make a goat happy.

The very first thought which came into George's mind next morning, was of Benny; but of course he had to wash and dress, and say his prayers, before he could run off to get into the stable; and as May and Frank were as quick as he was, they all stood at the door at the same moment, while Joe, the man, felt in his pocket for the key with which he had locked up the pet goat to keep him safe. I could not tell you how many fond words were said to Benny, nor how many kisses May dropped on his head, nor yet how great a number of nice things to eat were promised to him if he would be very good when he was put in his chaise. Of course Benny could not know what was said to him, but he stood quite still and rubbed his head gently against his young friends, as if he meant, "Yes, I shall be quite good, I assure you."

It *felt* a long time to wait, but it was only two hours after they got out of bed, when the goat-chaise came. It was to be for Frank, as he was so young, and his short legs got tired so very soon that he lost many nice walks in the green lanes; but May was to keep close by his side, and George had charge of Benny, so they would all three be quite happy and content. See how the elder brother and sister are taking care of Frank, telling him how to hold the reins; is it not a smart chaise for a boy or girl to ride

THE STORY OF A GOAT.

in? it makes us large grown-up people think how many pleasant things can never come to us again; and so few children feel enough how good God is in giving them such happy days when they are young, and every simple joy makes them glad.

Benny grew much beloved by his three friends, who spent all their play-hours with him; taking him out to draw Frank's chaise on fine bright days, and having games of play with him in his stable if it was wet and unfit to go in the lanes and fields.

But now I come to a part of my story which shows that goats (like boys and girls) can grow wild and naughty by being too much caressed. It is quite true that we should love and be kind to our pets, but I know that it does not do to let them act just as they please, and to spoil them by not making them mind what is said to them. Benny soon found out that if he stood still and would not stir a step, he did not feel the whip; he only found May's arms round his neck while she tried to coax him, or George patted his head and cried, "Good Benny, dear Benny."

After a few trials like this, in which he always got his own way, the goat found that he need not go one more step than he chose; so sometimes Frank's drives in the chaise were very short indeed, I can tell you. Then instead of being gentle when he was brought out for a game, he would rear up on his hind legs and play in such a rough way that poor little Frank drew back half afraid, and even



THE STORY OF A GOAT.

May did not go so very close to this wild goat, who would put his head through the rails and crop off leaves and flowers, and butt with his hard horns when any one no taller than himself came close. Yet they loved him, and tried to hide his faults. I think we are far more ready to tell the bad deeds of friends and playmates than of our pet animals!

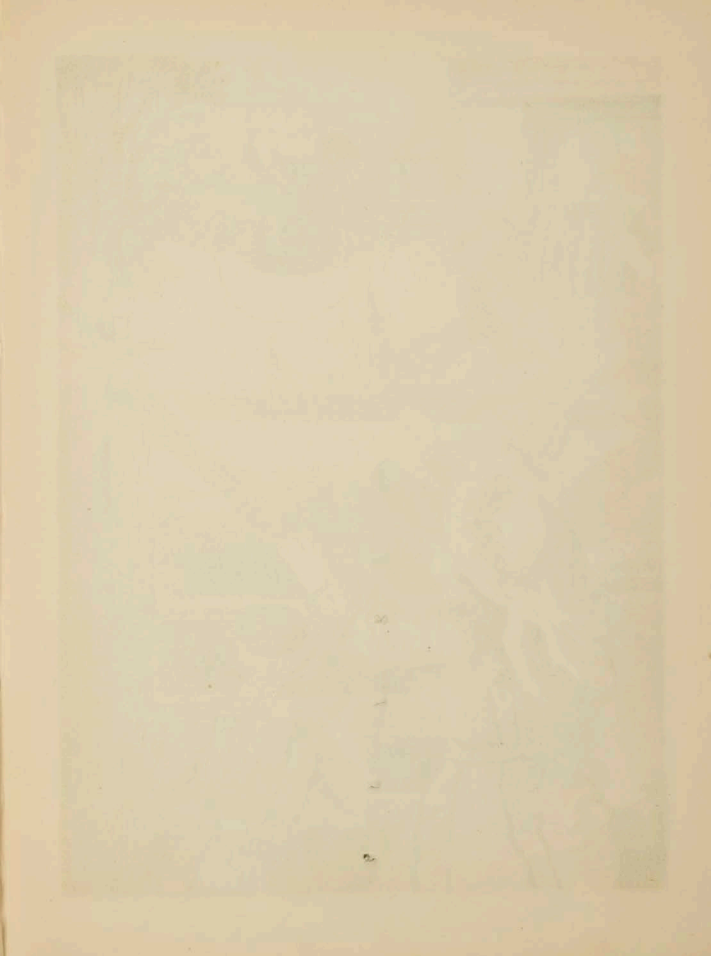
So George and May, and even Frank, did not leave off having a romp with their dear Benny, even when he would not mind what he was told to do, and grew each day more rude and rough.

It was June; the hay had been cut, and these little folks loved to go out into the fields round Lawn House, and toss and tumble and bury themselves and each other in the sweet dried grass, and one day they took Benny with them, knowing how well he loved a game.

At first the goat seemed to like it very well, and so perhaps the three children romped a little too much, and too long, for at last Benny jerked his cord quite out of George's grasp and darted away across the wide hay-field.

Then followed a long chase, and oh, *such* a hot one, under the rays of the June sun; each time George or May caught at the goat, he started away, and just then there were very few hay-makers, and those few did not try to help. I suppose they thought that it was best to leave Benny to tire himself quite out, and then he would be glad enough to be led quietly back to his home. But goats are strong,







THE STORY OF A GOAT.

sturdy animals, though they are not large, and this one grew more wild from the chase, and each moment seemed to make the chance of catching him less. At last George, May, and Frank got him quite near one corner of the field where the gate was which led into a lane where a cottage or two stood, and through which people very often had to pass. Panting, hot, yet now more hopeful, the children just came up with their pet, when to their terror and dismay he bounded right over the gate and darted like a mad thing up the lane, before a man who ran out at his door could stop him.

How many little boys and girls he frightened that day I cannot tell you, nor could I very well reckon up how many miles he ran; it was quite late in the evening when a big lad came to Lawn House with Benny, who had been found a long way from his real home.

George, May, and Frank had shed many tears, for they thought they should never see their dear pet again, and you may be sure that he was petted and kissed and well fed for that night. But next morning there were three sad faces when Mr. Ross said he would not keep Benny another day, he should go to the farm near by, for a wild rough goat like that was not fit to draw Frank's chaise, nor to be a pet for children. So you see that it does not do even for a goat to be too much spoiled, and even Benny suffered by his want of obedience.

THE NEW PET.



THE NEW PET.

ON a certain half-holiday, three children were out for a walk, when all at once they heard a curious voice close to them say, "How are you?" They saw nothing but a boy with a basket of vegetables, and it was not at all like a boy's voice. But when he saw them staring he smiled, and brought out from under his jacket a bird, and set it on his finger.

"Is it not a pretty bird, miss?" he said; and he certainly was very pretty, with his glossy black feathers, and bright eyes, which looked gravely at the children as he turned his head on one side.

"I wish you would buy poor Jack," the boy said; "he's so clever and good-tempered, and I can't keep him, as I'm going into a shop."

"I wish we could," cried all the children eagerly.

"You don't often see such a handsome Jackdaw," said the lad; "and the price is only half-a-crown."

"Wait one minute," cried Fred; and running off, he presently came back with the money, which he put into the boy's hand, saying, "He is ours, and you must bring him to our house, mamma says, in his cage."

This the boy promised to do, and the children went home full of joy.

Effie, Fred, and Tom Clark had often begged their mother to let them keep a live pet. They had plenty of toys of all sorts. Had not Effie six





THE NEW PET.

dolls, all with different dresses? and a large doll's house, with chairs and tables, and a real staircase, as well as picture-books? and a little workbox and writing-case? Had not Fred his box of tools, and a hoop and kite? and little Tom his marbles and tin soldiers? But something alive, they declared, was quite different, and would be so much nicer. "Why, mamma," cried Effie, "even my dolls do not care for me! they cannot do anything but stare, whatever I say to them."

"And my hoop can only run by my side, and I often wish it was a dog that could bark, and be as pleased to go out as I am," added Fred. While little Tom said, gravely, "Mamma dear, do let us have a pony, and a dog, and a pussy, and a dear little donkey,—oh, and a bird in a cage, please."

Mamma's reply at present had always been, "My dear children, I cannot think of giving you any living animal to keep till you are older, wiser, and more careful. When you, Effie, leave your dolls about the floor, and forget to put them to bed; or you, Fred and Tom, let your toys lie about in the garden; the dolls and toys do not suffer from your carelessness; but a dog, cat, or bird would suffer, and perhaps die if you forgot them, and that would be very sad and very wrong. A bird in a cage is more to be pitied than any pet, when given to thoughtless children, for it cannot escape or make its wants known. You must never forget, my children, that the same God who made you and me, made every living creature; and He teaches us in His Holy Bible that He cares for and loves them and wishes us to do the same."

"Dear mamma, we would be careful, and we do love animals," said Effie.

"Some day, then," said mamma, "we will see about it." And that was all they could get her to say.

But now they had their great wish; their mother knew the lad who sold

THE NEW PET.

the bird, and was glad to help him, for he was honest and steady, as well as kind-hearted. You may be sure that the children were up early the next morning, and nurse had no trouble in getting them dressed.

Jack had spent the night in his own large wicker cage, covered with a cloth, in mamma's store-room, in a sunny window, and now Effie, Fred, and Tom ran in to say good morning to him; but poor Jack looked so dull and unhappy that they could not think what was the matter with him.

"Is he ill?" asked little Tom.

"I think he's cross," said Effie.

"What is it, old fellow?" cried Fred.

But the bird took no notice of them. He only sat with his feathers ruffled, his head down, and his bright eyes dull, the picture of misery; even the breakfast of bread and milk that cook brought him, he would not touch. The children began to look as unhappy as he did.

But presently their mother came in and said,—

"Now can you not guess what is the matter with poor Jack?"

"No, mamma."

"Well, I can. Do not you think if one of you were taken away from your home and every one you loved, and shut up in a tiny closet with only strange faces staring at you, you would be unhappy?"

"Yes!" they said.

"And so does this poor bird."

"What shall we do, mamma?" asked Fred.

"Be very kind and patient, and you will find in a few days that Jack will be happy, and as he is used to being let out, I will open the cage door soon."

Mamma was quite right: the next day Master Jack was full of life and spirits, and the children were delighted.



THE NEW PET.

"Never get impatient with dumb animals," said their mother, "or think them cross when they are unhappy. Remember they cannot speak and tell you what is the matter. Now, Fred, it must be your duty to keep Jack's cage quite clean; and your's, Effie, to give him food and fresh water every day."

"And what will mine be?" cried little Tom.

"You can teach him to talk, as you are a little chatterbox," said mamma, laughing.

There was no more fear of the new pet being dull or miserable. He soon became fond of his new friends who were so kind to him, and he rewarded them by showing them all the funny things he could do and say. He would always flap his wings and cry, "Good morning, how are you?" when he first saw them, and he could also say, "What's that?" "Come here," and cough and sneeze, and laugh in a most amusing way. And he often learned new tricks; tried to mew like the kitten which cook had had given her, and which was also a great pet, and to bark like a neighbour's dog. But Jack's favourite trick, and one which caused some trouble, was to hide something; sometimes it was one of his bones or bits of crust, and then it did not matter; but when it came to a spoon being missed, it became serious. "It's that Jack," the servants said; but it was no use asking him where he had put it, for he only laughed and said, "How are you?" "Let him out," said little Tom, after every one had hunted for the spoon, "and he will find it." And this proved very good advice, for in a little while the clever bird went to an open drawer, got the spoon, which he had carefully rolled up in a cloth, and dropped it on the kitchen dresser by the cup and saucer.

"Those that hide can find," cried Ann, the maid. Sometimes, however, Jack would not find what he had hidden, and so the children had to take

THE NEW PET.

care not to leave their toys about. Fred declared that he had been much more careful since Jack had hidden his new pen-knife for a whole week in an old broken jug on a high shelf.

"So you see, mamma," he added, "it does us good to have Jack."

Mamma smiled, but she said,

"You have been very good children, and I do not regret having allowed you to keep the bird. I always find the cage clean, and the water fresh and bright, and your pet happy and well. I am sure he has grown since he came, and he is handsomer than ever."

"Handsome is that handsome does, I say, ma'am," said nurse, who heard this remark. "I wish I could find baby's coral; I expect Master Jack knows where it is!"

"Never mind, Nursey," said Tom. "Baby loves Jack."

"So she does, bless her," replied old Nurse, "and she can call him quite plain; all the same, I don't much care to have the black gentleman in my nursery."

"You must try and keep him in your own play-room, my dears," said mamma.

"I believe," said Tom, "that if Jack were in the nursery, and had something else of baby's to hide, he would put it where he has put the coral, and then Nurse would find it."

This was really a very clever idea of little Tom, and it was found to succeed. Jack ran off with a key Nurse gave him, and the children watched till they found his hiding-place, and there was the coral safe and sound.

After this Nurse was careful to keep the nursery door shut, and the children did their best to persuade Jack that their play-room was what they certainly thought it, the pleasantest room in the house. But it was useless

THE NEW PET.

to attempt to keep the bird from going pretty much where he liked. He was of a most inquisitive nature, and liked any new place, and I cannot say that he was at all obedient ; but he was so amusing, so good-tempered and fond of the children, that he was a general favourite. They had several frights about him soon after he came. Once they missed him from the cage when they came into their room after lesson time, and as they could not hear his well-known voice answering their calls, they ran into the kitchen, but Cook said he had not been there ; then they began to search the house, peeping into every room and calling, " Jack, Jack."

Nurse, to whom they ran next, whispered that baby was asleep, and that she was going to put her in her little bed, in mamma's room, and they must be very quiet ; they had now been in every room except their mamma's, and that was one in which Jack had never been allowed. At the door, however, they heard, " How are you?" and rushing in, what should they see but Master Jack on the dressing-table, looking at himself in the looking-glass, with great surprise ! He had been having a fine time ! a necklace of blue beads lay on the table, and some hair-pins, which no doubt he had been playing with ; and now he had taken the puff-ball out of the baby's powder-box, and standing with one leg on the pincushion, he held the powder-puff in his claw, while he stared at the other black bird looking at him from the glass.

The children screamed with laughter at first, but they soon found they had a difficult task before them, for Jack would not let them catch him ; he kept fluttering away when they came near him, chattering all the time. Nurse had to lay baby down and come and help them before they could get him into a corner and catch him. Then Fred carried him down stairs and put him in his cage, while they told their mamma about it, and she declared she would keep her door always shut.

THE NEW PET.

"I think, mamma," said little Tom, "that Jack wanted to make himself white with the powder-puff."

"And then he saw another bird doing the same," said Fred, laughing.

"I'm afraid, mamma," added Effie, "that he'll try and get there again."

Soon after this adventure, however, poor Jack had a much more serious one, and one which caused the children great grief, for it was their own fault. Though the bird was allowed his liberty so much in the day-time, he was always shut up at night. This was Fred's duty, and he had never forgotten it till one unfortunate summer evening. He and Effie were going out to tea, and not till the middle of the evening did he say to his sister : "I don't believe I shut Jack's door."

"Oh, Fred!" said Effie, "we must do it directly we get home."

And this they quite meant to do ; but what with their games, and presents, and all they had to tell on their return, besides being very sleepy, they never once thought of poor Jack, and their mamma trusted them so well now that she had left off reminding them every night of their charge. So the children slept, and Jack slept ; but his door was open, as he found out early in the morning, long before they were awake.

Now Jack thought this great fun ; he was an early riser always, and liked nothing better than a morning walk, and after climbing all about the play-room and hiding various small articles he found left on the table, he went into the hall, for the door was ajar, and before long he saw to his delight that the front door had been opened by the maid, and very soon he was out in the garden.

But what was Fred's dismay, when running into the play-room to see if Jack was safe, for he and Effie remembered their neglect when too late, he found him gone ! In vain they all called and looked everywhere : it soon



THE NEW PET.

became evident that he was not in the house, and there seemed but little chance of finding him in the garden. There, however, they spent most of their day, asking every one who passed the gate if they had seen him. Little Tom cried bitterly at the thought of leaving the poor bird out all night; and when it began to get dark, and Effie and Fred had to come in tired and disappointed without the pet they had grown so fond of, they too burst into tears, and mamma had to do her best to comfort them. She was very sorry, too, and as there was a wood near the house, it seemed scarcely likely they would ever see him again.

They hardly slept that night, and the sight of the empty cage made them cry again when they went into the play-room early next morning.

But, hark! what sound is that? surely nothing but Jack could make that odd noise! a sneeze, a cough, a laugh, and then, "How are you?"

You may guess how the children rushed to the window, and there was Jack on a rose-bush waiting to be let in. He was kissed and fed and petted to his heart's content; but he never told them where he had been all that day and night.

"Mamma," said little Tom, on the Sunday afternoon after this, "why do we love Jack better than before we lost him?"

The children were sitting as usual with their mother, who always read and talked to them on Sundays.

"Because you value him more," she replied; "and because you pity him for being lost. Effie, does this remind you of anything that we have been reading?"

"Yes, mamma, about Jesus Christ saving those who are lost."

"And about the sheep that was lost," added Fred.

"And the hymn, 'Away on the mountains wild and bare,' that we sing," cried Tom.

THE NEW PET.

"Yes, my children; the Blessed Lord Jesus came into our world to seek and to save the lost sinners who were wandering from Him. He says they are like sheep that have gone astray; and what does he call Himself, Fred?"

"The Good Shepherd."

"And what does He say about the lambs, Tom?"

"He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom."

"Quite right; and I hope you will be His lambs, and love and follow Him as the lambs and sheep follow the shepherd who loves them. You remember the beautiful hymn:—

See, Israel's gentle Shepherd stands
With all-engaging charms:
Hark! how He calls the tender lambs,
And folds them in His arms.

"Permit them to approach," He cries,
"Nor scorn their humble name;
"For 'twas to bless such souls as these,
The Lord of angels came."

He'll lead us by the heavenly streams,
Where living waters flow,
And guide us to the fruitful field
Where trees of knowledge grow.

The feeblest lamb amidst the flock
Shall be its Shepherd's care;
While folded in the Saviour's arms,
We're safe from every snare.

"Mamma," said Tom, "didn't Jackdaws feed Elijah?"

"No, Tom, ravens," said Fred, laughing.

"Tom is very nearly right," said mamma; "and I am glad, my little man, you have thought of that. Ravens are the same class of birds as Jackdaws, and like them in many ways; they can be taught to talk, are easily tamed,





THE NEW PET.

and have the same love of hiding things ; they are black, too, but larger birds. Now tell me some other birds spoken of in the Bible.'

"Storks," said Fred. "'As for the stork, the fir-tree is her nest.'"

"Eagles," said Effie. "'They shall mount up with wings as eagles.'"

"And sparrows, mamma," said Tom. "'Not one falleth to the ground without our Father.'"

"Good children. And then there is that beautiful text, 'How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!'"

"I believe, mamma," cried Tom, "that Jack knows we are talking about him, for here he comes on to the table."

"And he has got my pen in his mouth," said Effie ; "look, Fred, he wants to write in your geography book!"

"He wants to take notes of our talk about him ; don't you, Jack?" said Fred.

"We must watch him," said Tom ; "or Effie won't find her pen when Miss Smith comes to-morrow. Isn't it odd, mamma, birds hiding things?"

"It is an instinct, my dears, given by God for some wise purpose, no doubt. The more we notice and study the creatures God has made, the more we shall find to admire and wonder at in their habits, their beauty and their intelligence ; each one is fitted exactly for its own little life, and that life is useful and should be happy, for God meant the animals to be happy, and He teaches us to be kind and merciful to all things. 'A merciful man is merciful to his beast.'"

"And to his bird!" cried little Tom, as he stroked Jack's glossy feathers.

THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

ALL you little folks will know something about the story of Uncle Tom, which tells us how sad was the state of the poor slaves away over the sea in America. When you are old enough you will be able to read the book through, but until that time I think you must be content with hearing of Eva, the white child, and Topsy, the little negro girl, who loved her so much.

It was when "Tom" had been taken from his home and was to be sold to a new master, that he first saw the gentle Eva, with her blue eyes, and hair like gold. She was in the same ship as the party of slaves, among which was Uncle Tom.

Often and often she walked mournfully round the place where the gang of men and women sat in their chains. She would glide in among them, lift their chains with her slender hands, and then sigh woefully as she glided away.





THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

Several times she appeared suddenly among them, with her hands full of candy, nuts, and oranges, which she would distribute joyfully to them, and then be gone again.

The little one was shy, for all her busy interest in everything going on, and it was not easy to tame her. For awhile she would perch like a canary-bird on some box or package near Tom, and take from him, with a kind of grave bashfulness, the little articles he offered. But at last they got on quite confidential terms.

"What's little missy's name?" said Tom at last, when he thought matters were ripe to push such an inquiry.

"Evangeline St. Clare," said the little one, "though papa and everybody else calls me Eva. Now, what's your name?"

"My name's Tom: the little chil'en used to call me Uncle Tom, way back thar in Kentuck."

"Then I mean to call you Uncle Tom, because, you see, I like you," said Eva. "So, Uncle Tom, where are you going?"

"I don't know, Miss Eva."

"Don't know?" said Eva.

"No, I am going to be sold to somebody; but I don't know who."

"My papa can buy you," said Eva quickly; "and if he

buys you, you will have good times. I mean to ask him to, this very day."

"Thank you, my little lady," said Tom.

The boat here stopped at a small landing to take in wood, and Eva, hearing her father's voice, bounded nimbly away. Tom rose up, and went forward to offer his service in wooding, and soon was busy among the hands.

Eva and her father were standing together by the railings to see the boat start from the landing-place, when, by some sudden movement, the little one suddenly lost her balance, and fell over the side of the boat into the water. Her father, scarce knowing what he did, was plunging in after her, but was held back by some one behind him.

Tom was near, and he jumped into the water and caught the sweet little girl in his arms, and held her up so that her father could reach her and carry her off to the cabin to be dressed in dry clothes and taken care of.

All the rest of that day Tom did not see Eva, but on the morrow, when the voyage was just over, and people were getting ready to land, he caught sight of the little lady, by her father's side, as he talked with the slave-dealer who had charge of the negroes on board the ship.

"Papa, do buy him, I want him," she said; and Mr. St. Clare could not refuse his little pet. He went across to



THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

Tom, and bade him look up at his new master, and the poor black man felt so glad to hear a kind word, that he said, "God bless you, massa!"

Eva was as glad as Tom could be, I think. "You shall have good times, for papa is kind to every one," she said, as they left the ship to drive to Mr. St. Clare's home.

It was not the sort of house we see in our walks each day; it was built round the four sides of a large court-yard, and in the middle was a fountain and a little pond, in which gold and silver fishes swam about, and there were many roses and other sweet flowers.

Eva loved her home, and she cried out with joy to see it again, for she had been away to meet her aunt, who was to stay with her for a time. This lady had a very long name, I am afraid some little readers will be quite puzzled to say. "Miss O-phelia;" she had come to see to the house and the servants, in the place of Eva's mother, who said she could not bear so much trouble.

When Miss Ophelia paid a visit to the kitchen she stood quite still from surprise, it was such a strange scene. Dinah, the cook, sat in the middle of a group of little negroes who had been called in to help her; one had the peas to shell, one had to pick the small feathers from a fowl, one peeled potatoes, and so each child was kept busy, and

THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

would get a rap on the curly head with a stick, if he or she grew lazy.

Dinah used to say that these little blacks had been made just "to save her steps:" she was idle herself, and kept old shoes, rags, and rubbish, in the drawers, which were meant for kitchen things. It made her very cross when Miss Ophelia came to look into her secret hiding-places, and even when all things had been put neat she would not keep them so. Now and then she called the little negro girls to come and have a "clearing-up," and said she was going to keep them all in better order; but this never lasted beyond a day, and poor Miss Ophelia found there was nothing to be done but leave Dinah to her own way.

One day Mr. St. Clare brought a new little slave to his house; she was eight or nine years old, and when asked her name she said it was "Topsy." Her eyes were as bright as glass beads, and she was full of tricks and fun; she could dance and sing, and make every one laugh. She knew nothing of God, and had never learnt to do anything but fetch water and wash dishes; very often poor Topsy had felt the whip, for its marks were all over her back.

The first thing Miss Ophelia taught her was to make a bed; and even while she was doing that this sly little

THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

negro, who did not know right from wrong, caught up a scarf and a pair of gloves, which she hid in the sleeve of her dress. Her mistress saw a tiny bit of the scarf under her sleeve, and bade her own her fault at once, and then she should not be whipped.

Topsy began to tell that she had taken some beads which Miss Eva wore round her neck, but just then the little Eva came in with her beads on, and Miss Ophelia could not make the black child see that it was as much a lie as to deny what she had really done. I think Topsy felt as if she must tell some more faults, and so make them up.

“What shall I do with you?” said the lady, who wanted to be kind, and teach this girl to be good.

“You must whip me,” Topsy said; but she had been beaten so cruelly by her old master that she only laughed at Miss Ophelia’s whippings.

Eva was fond of Topsy, but she did not forget her great friend, Tom.

“Uncle Tom,” she said, one day, when she was reading to her friend, “I can understand why Jesus *wanted* to die for us.”

“Why, Miss Eva?”

“Because I’ve felt so, too.”

“What is it, Miss Eva?—I don’t understand.”

THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

“ I can't tell you ; but when I saw those poor creatures on the boat, you know, when you came up and I, some had lost their mothers, and some their husbands, and some mothers cried for their little children ; and a great many other times, I've felt that I would be glad to die, if my dying could stop all this misery. I *would die* for them, Tom, if I could,” said the child, earnestly, laying her little thin hand on his.

Tom looked at the child with awe ; and when she, hearing her father's voice, glided away, he wiped his eyes many times as he looked after her.

On Sunday evenings she would carry her small Bible to a mossy seat at the end of the garden, and there read aloud some sweet words, which made the poor slave think of the time when all his grief should be over. One night the sky was full of rosy sun-set clouds, and Eva cried out that they looked like the gates of pearl.

“ I am going there, Uncle Tom,” she said ; and rising, she pointed to the sky with her little hand, “ I am going, before long.”

The negro looked at her, and saw how thin were her white hands, and how short her breath was, and he had often found that a little game in the garden wearied her. Yes ! Uncle Tom saw that Eva was going home to the



bright spirits about which she loved to hear him sing, and he felt very sad, for her sweet face made him glad, and her gentle pity helped him very often.

It seemed that her chief thought, now she knew she must soon die, was of the poor negroes, who would be so sad to lose her. Her kind little heart was full of desire to do them some good; to teach them to read, that so they might know God's Holy Word, and to show them how to write, for then those who, like poor Tom, had been taken from home, could send a letter to wife and children. Most of all did Eva wish that she could get for these people their freedom; but she was just a little girl, with no strength, no power, and she was only able to talk to them and try and say words about Jesus which they should not forget when she was dead.

Perhaps she was more anxious about Topsy than any of the other young negroes.

One day when the child had been very bad, and Miss Ophelia was scolding her, while her black eyes twinkled with fun, Eva, who was listening close by, thought she would try what she could do with Topsy. She called her into a small glass room and made her sit down by her side on the floor; and Mr. St. Clare, who was not far off, heard his dear little girl say,

“What does make you so bad Topsy? why won't you try to be good?”

It was hard to get a word from the black child, but at last she said, “There can't nobody love niggers.”

I am sure it could only have been God who put these sweet words into Eva's lips:

“Oh, Topsy, poor child, *I* love you; I love you, and I want you to be good. I am very unwell, Topsy, and I think I shan't live a great while, and it grieves me to have you be so naughty. I wish you would try to be good for my sake; it's only a little while I shall be with you.”

That was the first time poor black Topsy had felt what love was like, and tears ran down her cheeks while Eva went on.

“Poor Topsy! don't you know that Jesus loves us all alike? He is just as willing to love you as me. He loves you just as I do, only more, because He is better. He will help you to be good, and you can go to heaven at last, and be an angel for ever, just as much as if you were white.”

The hard little heart was made soft now by love, and Topsy sobbed out.

“Oh, dear Miss Eva! dear Miss Eva! I will try. I never did care before.”



THE STORY OF EVA AND TOPSY.

It was quite true that this little Eva had not long to stay in the world ; each day she grew more weak and frail, just like a tired dove which pines to get away from earth ; and at last she could not rise from her bed. Then she thought of her black friends, and begged to see them, and to give every one some of the long golden hair which had been cut from her head.

“ When you look at it, think that I loved you, and am gone to heaven, and that I want to see you all there,” she said.

Then the men and women went close to take her little gift, with tears rolling down their faces ; and, not long after the poor slaves were told that Eva was dead, and that a bright smile came, and she said, “ Love, joy, peace,” as she passed to heaven.

When she lay white and still on her little bed, poor Topsy crept in with one lovely rosebud in her hand.

“ Oh, Miss Eva, I wish I was dead too !” she cried ; and then Miss Ophelia raised her up and tried to comfort her, and by and by took the child away and made her free.

But Topsy never forgot Eva, and that it was from her she first knew of the love of Jesus for the poor blacks.

